

REMARKS

The indication that claims 17 and 23 are allowable over the prior art of record is acknowledged.

By the present amendment, claim 17 which depended from claim 1 has been rewritten in independent form incorporating the features of claim 1 therein such that claim 17 should now be allowed, with claim 1 being canceled. Further, claim 23 which depended from claim 14 has also been written in independent form incorporating the features of parent claim 14 therein, with claim 14 being cancelled, and claim 23 should also now be allowed. The dependent claims which depended claim 1 have been amended to depend from claim 17 and the dependent claims which depended from claim 14 have been amended to depend from claim 23 with minor informalities in the claims being corrected, as will be discussed below, and applicants submit that all claims should now be in condition for allowance.

With regard to the Examiner objecting to claims 1, 14, 18, 19, 24 and 25, and apparently indicating that the variable "N" is utilized to mean a number of write elements, whereas the variable "n" is used to describe the number of thin film write elements, and the Examiner's apparent suggestion that the variable "N" be utilized for all limitations dealing with the number of write elements, applicants note that the variable "N" and the variable "n" have different definitions. Looking to claim 1, for example, "N" is defined as "(N being an integer of 2 or more)" (emphasis added) whereas in terms of the variable "n-th", "n" is defined as "(n being a natural number)" (emphasis added), such that applicants have not utilized the Examiner's suggestion in light of the different definitions.

As to the objection to claim 19, claim 19 has been amended in the manner suggested by the Examiner.

As to the rejection of claims 1, 3, 14, 16, 18 - 20, 22, 24 and 25 under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Usui (US Patent No. 6,172,831 B1) in view of Ozue et al (US Patent No. 6,801,379 B2), such rejections are considered to be obviated by the cancellation of independent claims 1 and 14 and the amendment of the other claims to depend from claim 17 or 23, which claims 17 and 23 have been indicated as being allowed, and have been written in independent form by this amendment. Accordingly, a discussion of the cited art in relation to the present claims is considered unnecessary.

In view of the above amendments and remarks, applicants submit that all claims present in this application should now be in condition for allowance and issuance of an action of favorable nature is courteously solicited.

To the extent necessary, applicants petition for an extension of time under 37 CFR 1.136. Please charge any shortage in the fees due in connection with the filing of this paper, including extension of time fees, to the deposit account of Antonelli, Terry, Stout & Kraus, LLP, Deposit Account No. 01-2135 (Case: 520.43000X00), and please credit any excess fees to such deposit account.

Respectfully submitted,

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